

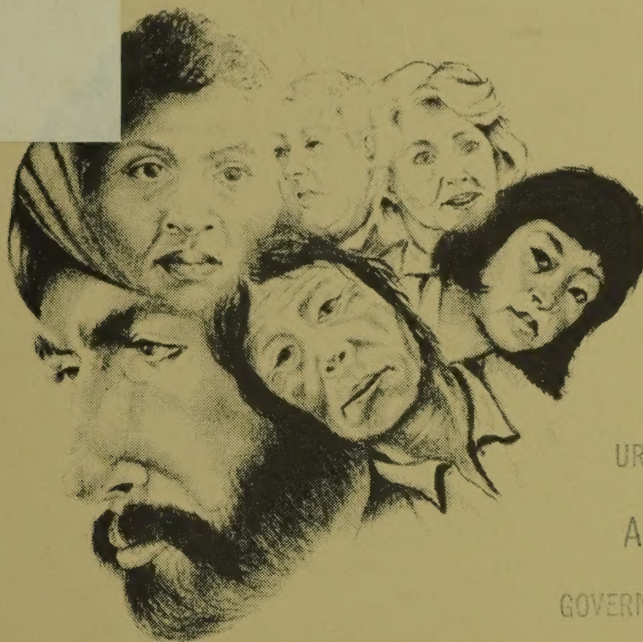
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REPORT

on

THE MAYOR'S RACE RELATIONS CONFERENCE

URBAN/MUNICIPAL



URBAN MUNICIPAL

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GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

HAMILTON WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD ETHNIC / RACIAL HARMONY

NOVEMBER 21, 1986

Sponsored by:

**The Mayor's Race Relations Committee
for the City of Hamilton**

and

The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton

Department of the Secretary of State

Hamilton and District Multicultural Council

**Hamilton-Wentworth Regional
Police Department**

Ministry of Citizenship and Culture

**Mohawk College of Applied Arts
and Technology**

**Race Relations Division,
Ontario Human Rights Commission**

**HAMILTON CONVENTION
CENTRE**

December 12, 1986.

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THE MAYOR'S RACE RELATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

PREPARED BY:

Peter D. Sianchuk, B.A., M.B.A.

With the assistance of the following Conference reporters:

Lynda Anderson, Secretary
Donald Cobb, B.A., LL.B.,
Sheila Gertridge, B.A.
Ivan Kocmarek, Ph.D.
Lucille Lanza, M.A.
Owen Mahoney, M.A.
Duncan Martin, M.A.
Sharon Sybalski, B.A.
Nadia Tirimacco, B.Sc.

under the authority of Conference Chairperson:

Steve Barrs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Conference was to promote a positive ethnic/race relations climate in the workplace, the school and the community. It encouraged participants to commit themselves to good community relations and to initiate future programs for full human rights, equal opportunity and community goodwill. Throughout the day-long Conference, the attempt was made to make the participants aware of the many manifestations of prejudice and discrimination; to develop an appreciation for the points of view of people different from themselves and to begin to develop positive methods for combatting prejudice and discrimination.

Beginning with Dr. Harish Jain's breakfast talk on "Race Relations and Industry" and until Mayor Robert Morrow's closing remarks, these themes were reinforced throughout the Conference. Dr. Jain demonstrated that visible minorities are still being both consciously and unconsciously discriminated against in the workplace. There is a continued need for committees to encourage changes in the areas of company recruitment policies, hiring criteria and other systemic discrimination practices. Unconscious discrimination through systemic policies is one of the most serious forms because people are often not aware that it exists.

Conference Chairperson Steve Barrs began proceedings at the Convention Centre by reflecting how we must examine our own beliefs in relation to others in order to make us better able to deal with racism. Professor Jamshed Mavalwala followed with a humorous and interesting speech that set the tone for the morning workshops by offering what was to become a recurring educational message. It is our lack of knowledge of others that often leads to prejudice. We must use education to overcome this barrier. As individuals, we must develop empathy for others and the understanding that all people are striving towards goals much in the same way as ourselves. Treat others as you'd like to be treated - as an individual.

Conference participants were then split into 6 morning workshops which allowed for a more personal examination of specific issues complete with question and answer periods. Workshop numbers 2, 3 and 4 clearly defined prejudice and discriminatory behaviour. In the workshop entitled "Hate Literature In Canada" (No.2), Constable Mark Mendelson of the Toronto Police Forces Ethnic Relations Unit explained the dangers of hate literature and how extremists are able to bring their messages to the public. Since they tend to prey upon the ignorance in people he stressed that we need to educate people so that they are better prepared to deal with hate promoters. Workshop No. 3 (A History Of Racism In Canada), examined racist incidents throughout Canadian history. It showed that not only should we redress our past mistakes but also ensure that we don't repeat any wrongful measures in the future.

Workshop No. 4 highlighted the need for a balance between knowledge, skill and attitude development within traditional subject areas. Dalewood Middle School offered the example of an educational institution that has adopted programs which specifically try to give the students a better understanding and sensitivity in dealing effectively with racial incidents and related issues.

Other morning workshops increased participants awareness in respect to race relations by:

- showing how the television media is trying to promote racial harmony through additional ethnic programming,
- identifying systemic discrimination as continuing to exist in the workplace and that it must be resolved on an ongoing basis,
- exploring various sections of the Charter of Rights showing how its a constitutional statement which sets precedents based upon its rulings. Other codes exist as well and each Canadian should become familiar with his or her rights so that violations can be rectified.

The luncheon address reaffirmed the government's support for race relations programs. Dr. Lily Munro, the Minister for Citizenship and Culture stressed the need for Conferences such as this to complement the legislative policies of the government. Affirmative Action programs although not popular with all citizens will create equality for all people in the long run. Rabbi Gunther Plaut continued the midday talk with his look at "Underground Racism". Although overt discrimination is no longer tolerated in our society there still exist glaring examples of racist behaviour. He cited the recent controversy involving 155 Tamils who received delays in their attempted entry into Canada as a racist incident. Rabbi Plaut reaffirmed his strong belief in Canada as a multicultural nation and attended the Conference in support of its ideas and goals.

The Conference participants went off to the afternoon workshops further imbued with the spirit of tolerance and understanding. The afternoon sessions also represented a cross-section of racial issues. The workshops "Racism And Sexism In The Workplace" and "Racial Conflict In The Neighbourhood" both highlighted the support systems that exist to assist racially affected groups. Ken Stone of the Hamilton Labour Council noted his groups program called "Racism Hurts Everyone" which offers assistance to victims of racism. Women are assisted by the Labour Council in areas such as day care and maternity leave. Scouter Ward of the Ontario Human Rights Commission developed an extensive list of neighbourhood support groups which exhibited many more sources of help than people may first suspect. He also gave out literature which included his phone number for anyone who wanted additional information on the subject.

"Ethnic/Racial Jokes And Slurs" was a workshop that tried to demonstrate what its like to be the victim of a racial joke. The discussion, which was chaired by Mr. Victor Abraham, emphasized how we must sensitize ourselves to those who bear the brunt of slurs. This relates back to Professor Mavalwala's morning talk that remarked how we must understand people on an individual, non-stereotypical basis; accept them as we would want to be accepted ourselves. In the workplace, corrective measures must be taken immediately to discipline any racially motivated comments otherwise they will be maintained and reinforced through such behaviour.

Workshop No. 11 was a multifaceted approach to examining the role of the school system in fostering ethnic/racial understanding. The discussion first drew attention to the fact that the Province has formed a committee to develop race relations policy for educational institutions. Measures such as incorporating more professional development days that look specifically at race relations into the school year and encouraging the entry of minorities into the system were seen as methods of allowing the vitality and richness of our multicultural society to be an inspiration to us all. These issues must be addressed at the school level because children are the future of this varied society.

As a means of summing up the day's many issues the Conference featured a Plenary Session which involved 6 distinguished speakers from the community. Unfortunately due to time restrictions a panel discussion was not possible but each speaker reinforced the need for Canada to be committed to a harmonious multi-ethnic/multi-racial existence.

In his closing remarks, Ontario Human Rights Commissioner Dan McIntyre, congratulated the Mayor's Race Relations Committee for such a successful meeting. He asked, "Although we have a Cabinet Committee on Race Relations, a Human Rights Commissioner and a Conference such as this, where do we go from here?" There must be a follow up to the Conference or else it is limited in terms of its usefulness. We must follow up in our schools (education) in our laws (employment equity) and in our communities (neighbourhood programs). Lets spread the message of this Conference throughout Hamilton and the rest of the Ontario community.

**BREAKFAST ADDRESS:
RACE RELATIONS AND INDUSTRY**

Professor Harish Jain, Department of Business,
McMaster University and Co-Chairman Mayor's Race Relations Committee

The Conference kicked off with a breakfast meeting at the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Harish Jain, Co-Chairman of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, began the day with a talk on recent trends in race relations and how these trends relate to industry in Hamilton and Canada overall.

Dr. Jain's main thrust was that visible minorities are consciously and unconsciously being denied full participation in many Canadian institutions which includes the media, police forces and firefighters among others.

As citizens of Canada and residents of Hamilton we will be the ultimate losers if we continue to discriminate and do not affirm the abilities and contributions of visible minority groups in public and private service. For example, if the discrimination of Jews continued in its historical magnitude we may never have had such fine people as Chief Justice Bora Laskin or Stephen Lewis representing our country. Lincoln Alexander may not have become Lieutenant Governor of Ontario if the overt discrimination of blacks was still tolerated. The attainment of these respected citizens doesn't mean that discrimination no longer exists; it does.

In order to expand upon this point the following statistics were provided. Since 1971 the non-English/French population of Canada has increased by 9 million people (approximately 25%). In Toronto over 50% of the residents are non-English/French. In Hamilton this figure is between 25 and 30%. This reflects a society which is multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-ethnic and will increasingly be so in the future. Within this diverse backdrop problems exist. In a country which attends United Nation Conferences calling for equality and that has a democratic Charter of Rights, our diversity and legal protection should foster equality of opportunity; this isn't the case. As a result we need responsible race relations committees to advise the government on initiatives which need to be taken in this area.

Dr. Jain then began to focus his talk on how industry has developed unconscious practices which discriminate against minorities. He highlighted several studies which have borne out this fact. A recent research project conducted by himself looked at police hiring practices right across Canada. Evidence showed that the main reason used by police forces for not hiring non-whites was that they don't apply. Dr. Jain asserts that they don't apply because traditional media sources are not proper vehicles for reaching the visible minorities. It is the narrow channels of recruitment for employment positions which results in the exclusion of racial minority groups. For example, if an industrial plant has a traditionally white work force then by word of mouth only other whites will become aware of job openings.

The systemic discrimination inherent in our society is evidenced in the interviewing process as well. An applicant who comes from a culture where direct eye contact is not socially acceptable will be disadvantaged in an interview. Research has shown that direct eye contact is a positive attribute in an interview. Questions asked in interviews and advertised job requirements can also discriminate. Height and weight requirements restricted certain minorities from the police force until these practices were struck down as discriminatory by the courts. The

requirement that a dishwasher have "Canadian Experience" (an actual case) is not only unnecessary for the job but discriminatory because it is prejudiced against recent immigrants.

In order to rectify discriminatory practices against visible minorities employers must ensure that the job requirements which they set are absolutely necessary for the job. They must make religious accommodations for those who require such treatment and make a conscious effort to rectify policies and practices which discriminate due to narrow channels of recruitment: otherwise "unconscious" discrimination will continue to permeate our society.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Steve Barrs,
Conference Chairperson and Values Education Consultant,
The Board of Education for the City of Hamilton

The topic of Racism is extremely sensitive and complex. While we all have good intentions, sometimes our lack of sensitivity, ignorance, upbringing, socio-economic status and personal values prevent us from dealing effectively with people whose backgrounds and needs are quite different from ours.

Usually, it is easier to close our eyes and hope that Racism will go away, or to label it something else, or to make fun of it and try to make it smaller and less important, and therefore, not something that we really have to deal with. Even when we seem to be prepared to deal with Racism, we are often not. We approach the topic of Racism as an academic exercise, hoping to instill some cognitive learning but not having the time or the will to change attitudes, especially our own.

As members of this community, we are fortunate to have a thoughtful, people oriented Mayor, a man of courage and conviction who is not afraid to deal with Racism.

In co-initiating and guiding the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, Bob Morrow has demonstrated time and again, a sensitivity and empathy for victims of prejudice and discrimination both from our visible minority and ethnic communities. Working together with representatives of the visible minority and ethnic communities under the mandate of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, Mayor Bob Morrow is helping to establish a positive ethnic/race relations climate for Hamilton.

WELCOME ON BEHALF OF THE CITY:

Mayor Robert M. Morrow

Mayor Robert Morrow welcomed all participants to the Conference and expressed his appreciation to all who assisted in organizing and making a Conference in race relations for the City of Hamilton, possible. The Mayor stated that all involved should be proud of the fact that this Conference was the first of its kind to be held in Hamilton and he hoped this would lead to more activities and events of this nature. The Mayor also expressed that he was confident the day would be a success, especially with all the effort and hard work put into its development. Mayor Morrow closed by stating that he felt certain that this Race Relations Conference and other events of this nature would help to create and sustain an environment of mutual understanding and harmony among the multi-ethnic, multi-racial citizens of Hamilton.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: RACE RELATIONS - HAMILTON AND THE WORLD

Professor Jamshed Mavalwala
Department of Anthropology
University of Toronto and President,
World Conference on Religion and Peace (Canada)
a United Nations Non-Government Agency

The morning sessions were highlighted by Professor Jamshed Mavalwala's spirited discussion on attitudes which affect race relations. His address to over 350 Conference attendees began with a global perspective on race relations and then narrowed down to the local and personal levels. Dr. Mavalwala's talk emphasized the fact that our lack of knowledge of other people and their cultures, contributes greatly to the biases and discriminations inherent in our society.

At a global level we form our perceptions of the world based upon our acquired knowledge. The information which we receive is often incomplete and thus paints an unrealistic picture of world affairs. For example, we hear of Africa being described as the "dark continent" when in fact it receives the most hours of sunlight of any country in the world. We have knowledge that we don't use, compassion which we don't show and information which we don't read.

These deficiencies become evident when examining Canadian immigration policies. Five Immigration Acts have been legislated. All were created in a frenzy, poorly thought out, restrictive and non-humanitarian. As the "browning of the west" continues, policies must be developed which are proactive not reactive.

Current policies reflect a Canadian attitude which is often misconceived and ill informed. Dr. Mavalwala illustrated this situation by observing that Canadians think of Canada in terms of being a wealthy nation and therefore desire immigration policies which safeguard this wealth. Yet in terms of wealth we're ranked 30th in the world. As a western industrial nation we place 14th, behind countries such as India (#7) whom we regard as poor and backward. These proud attitudes reflect a complacency in the country. It must be overcome in order to come to grips with our changing society.

Within Canada other changes are evolving which will test our preconceived notions of reality. As the average age of Canadians shifts upwards, a strain on pension funds will be created. When young people reach retirement age these funds may be dried up. Young workers are needed to safeguard these expected societal benefits. Immigration has a role to play here.

At the local level we see changes all around us. We notice the influx of immigrants and stereotype them. Names we use such as black, white and paki reinforce these stereotypes. An US-THEM dichotomy is established. It's not until we meet someone from a visible minority and get to know them personally that we are able to separate them from the rest of their group and truly identify he or she as an individual.

Dr. Mavalwala insisted that we must be willing to learn from others. Too often at the cross cultural level we want to do things our way and not "theirs" because we think ours is the best. When comparing our nation to the rest of the world we hold up our best artists, painters and writers while negating the talents of others. If we are to look at our highest common denominators then we should be willing to do the same for others. For example when discussing the Italian race many people refer to them as bricklayers and cement mixers rather than as a rich culture which gave the world a multitude of great architects, art work and literary classics. He furthered this point by stating that in order to find out more about a Hindu you should speak to one and get an individual's view rather than just reading 2 paragraphs in an encyclopedia.

Finally Dr. Mavalwala addressed race relations at an individual level in order to sum up his remarks. The key to this part of the discussion was that everyone works to achieve a goal. This goal can be described as a Homecoming Process (HP). What is this HP going to be? It may take the form of rectifying deprived love or work satisfaction. Whatever form it takes it must occur at a personal level. Only at this point can you understand your own HP and that of others. Only through individualized, personal communication can we truly understand other people. It is through this HP that improvements in race relations will occur.

WORKSHOP NO. 1: THE MEDIA'S PERCEPTION OF ETHNIC/RACIAL MINORITY GROUPS

CHAIR: Bashir Khan, Multicultural Producer and Broadcasting Consultant

WORKSHOP LEADERS: Bert Allen, Manager of Community Relations (Ontario) CBC
John Best, News Director CHCH-TV

Bert Allen of the CBC led off the workshop with a discussion on what the media can do to promote racial harmony. He initially stated that cultural diversity is beneficial to Canadian society. The CBC has instituted program policies that reflect Canadian communities. After a brief review of early examples of such programming he mentioned television shows such as "Morningside", "Not A Bad Year" and "Street Legal" as current offerings in the same genre. There is still a need for more multicultural programs during primetime and a multicultural mandate in all programs.

The CBC policy in news broadcasting is that anything worth reporting must meet and adhere to such journalistic standards as accuracy, integrity and no racial stereotyping. They were the first Canadian network to create a team of community relations reporters. The problem at the CBC at the present time is the lack of funding. Funding problems filter throughout CBC programming policies.

The workshop continued to focus on news broadcasting as John Best of CHCH-TV took over. As a newsroom broadcast journalist he's covered approximately 51 news stories which have had racial themes. CHCH has no official policies for dealing with stories that have racial content, however the basic principles of journalism seem to be sufficient guidelines to cover such events according to Mr. Best.

CHCH doesn't have any hiring policies for visible minorities nor does it employ any women reporters at the current time. The station believes in equal opportunity but isn't prepared to fire someone just to make a job for someone else.

After showing 2 short videos which dealt with racial incidents (local news items, one which involved the Yellow Cab Company, the other which occurred at the Hamilton Farmers Market) Mr. Best continued that the news should reflect reality. It is for this reason that his station avoids editorials in news situations because they tend to skew opinions in one particular direction.

A lively question and answer session followed with both speakers responding to workshop participants queries. Several of the questions asked are presented:

QUESTION: Will CBC budget cuts affect multicultural programming?

MR. ALLEN: Budget cuts are an unfortunate reality at the CBC these days. It will be up to area and regional managers to decide on their exact focus. Multicultural programs will however continue.

QUESTION: How do you judge which story to cover?

MR. BEST: For CHCH to cover a news story it is more of a question of logistics rather than the actual content of the story itself.

QUESTION: Are you ever asked to "lay-off" situations and not report them?

MR. BEST: Everyone is constantly trying to manipulate the media. Many groups call on us to "lay-off" on certain stories but these people are not necessarily multicultural or ethnic. Their interest is usually based on some other criteria.

WORKSHOP NO. 2: HATE PROPAGANDA IN CANADA

CHAIR: Phil Leon, National Chairman, League for Human Rights, B'nai B'rith, Canada

WORKSHOP LEADER: Constable Mark Mendelson, Ethnic Relations Unit, Metropolitan Toronto Police Force

In 1983 due to escalating tensions between Israel and Lebanon in the Middle-East, the Metropolitan Toronto Police Forces Ethnic Relations Unit added an anti-semitism squad to its contingent. Workshop leader Constable Mark Mendelson was brought in to work with this squad. The new unit represented an example of the attempts by North American police departments to deal with the new challenges

confronting them through the 1970s and 1980s. Constable Mendelson's squad decided that they would direct their initial activities in challenging the legality of hate propagandists (people who disseminate racist materials which discriminate against visible and identifiable minority groups).

The first step was to draft legislation which would allow the police to prosecute. Section 280.1 of the Criminal Code allows police prosecution of a group or individual if they:

1. advocate the genocide of an identifiable group
2. cause a public incitement through their hate propaganda which is likely to cause a breach of the peace.

A general discussion of the legalities that are involved with the arresting, charging and bringing to trial of a promoter of hate literature highlighted how difficult that it is for the police to prosecute these people.

Hate propaganda can take on many different forms and can be quite sophisticated. Computer modems are used to communicate hate literature from the USA to Canada and our laws are not prepared to deal with this. Ernst Zundel, who recently made the news with his conviction (currently under appeal) on hate charges, has published 165 books worldwide on the subject.

Although the problem exists in Canada it is much more severe in the USA where groups such as the Aryan Nations, Ku Klux Klan and Chick Publications Ltd. spread their message through a much larger membership base. These extremist groups prey upon unemployed members of low socio-economic status. They offer them a position in their organization which helps to give the individual self esteem. The "scapegoating" aspect of the extremists recruitment platform was emphasized.

The promoters of hate propaganda know exactly what they are doing and who they are targeting. They also know that through the distribution of hate literature that they are able to make great profits from denigrating minority groups. This raised a question from the audience as to why people buy this material. Is there a need in our society for this literature? Constable Mendelson rationalized that people often have no ideas of other cultures yet develop biases from information that they receive from the media or by word of mouth. The media provides easy answers but these may be general and/or incomplete. It is the lack of education in regards to other races which allows this situation to develop.

The recent court trials of Ernst Zundel and James Keegstra (of Ecksville, Alberta) raised the question of providing free publicity to these extremists. Dr. Mark Nagler of the University of Waterloo asked whether or not a prosecution against Zundel may appear to be a hollow victory to some people. Constable Mendelson capably responded by stating that the long run gains of society as a whole will outweigh the short run publicity given to these people. The profiteering of these propagandists must be made known to the public.

Chairperson Phil Leon of the B'nai B'rith (Canada) then offered statistics which highlighted the areas of Canada which demonstrated the highest levels of discriminatory beliefs. Quebec's high percentage was attributed to the lack of education in the rural areas as well as the homogeneous nature of this society.

This reinforced a common theme of the Conference, that education is a prime tool in the battle against discrimination.

The workshop closed with Constable Mendelson highlighting the number of racially motivated incidences in Toronto (approximately 200 per year) and how frustrations in dealing with strangers often end up with ethnic slurs. As time ran out he reaffirmed that "...this type of Conference is a starting ground in our battle against hate literature...".

WORKSHOP NO. 3: A HISTORY OF RACISM IN CANADA

CO-CHAIRS: Lucille Lanza and Carolyn Gray, Curriculum Writers,
Adolescent Citizenship Program, Hamilton Board of Education

WORKSHOP PANEL: Kamala Bhatia, Indo-Canada Society
Dr. Norman Chan, President, Chinese Canadian Society
Walter Cooke, Executive Director, Hamilton Regional Indian
Centre
Mike Takeda, Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
Cynthia Taylor, Hamilton and District Multicultural Centre

The workshop examined racist incidents in Canadian history with particular focus on the experiences of Canadians of Black, Chinese, East Indian, Japanese and Native origins. Each group was represented by a speaker who briefly discussed their ethnic group. A question and answer period followed.

The Black Canadian Community was represented by Mrs. Cynthia Taylor. Mrs. Taylor focused on the outstanding activities of blacks throughout Canadian history. She highlighted the accomplishments of people such as Paolo Brown, William Hall and Mary Shad Cary among others.

Dr. Norman Chan addressed the question of Canadian racist legislation. He reviewed laws such as the 1904 Head Tax which was imposed upon all incoming Chinese and the 1885 Immigration Act which discriminated against Chinese immigrants. Recent examples of racism were also included such as the CTV program "Campus Giveaway" which depicted Chinese Canadian students as foreigners who denied white Canadian students employment opportunities in the pharmaceutical trade.

The East Indian Community was represented by Dr. Kamala Bhatia who pointed out that although many different East Indian groups have immigrated to Canada they usually get lumped together under one name. Often they are only referred to by the perjorative title-Paki. He also cited the various locales which the Canadian East Indian population is drawn from such as Great Britain, the West Indies, India and Pakistan.

The discussion continued as Mrs. Mickey Takeda spoke on the internment of Canadian Japanese during World War II and the question of redress. Mrs. Takeda described how Japanese people were shipped to internment camps to live in housing without insulation, heat or privacy. She pointed out that the redress sought by these people must be viewed in the light of past injustices perpetrated upon their community.

Finally Walter Cooke gave a brief narrative on discrimination in regards to Native Canadians. Long ago there was no racism because we were all the same. Contact between different cultures breeds racism. It is the lack of mutual understanding that fuels the racist fire. He stressed that if we don't "wake up" then racism will continue to be one of the major diseases in North America.

During the question and answer period Mr. Cooke clarified marital status under the Indian Act. Should a native Indian woman marry a white man, then she would lose all her rights as guaranteed to the Native Indian people. Conversely should a non Indian woman marry a native man then she would be safeguarded under the Indian Act.

WORKSHOP NO. 4: DIFFERENT LOOKS...ONE WORLD...SAME FEELINGS...DEALING EFFECTIVELY WITH PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION IN A SCHOOL

CHAIR: Jim Jones, Chairman of English Language Studies,
Mohawk College

WORKSHOP LEADERS: Steve Barrs, Values Education Consultant, Hamilton
Board of Education

Andrew Cranbury, Principal, Dalewood Middle School

Nancy Martin, Librarian, Dalewood Middle School

Owen Mahoney, Curriculum Writer, Adolescent Citizenship
Program, Hamilton Board of Education

This workshop set out to examine the approach taken in implementing educational curriculum which addresses the issues of prejudice and discrimination. Conference Chairperson, Steve Barrs, Values Education Consultant for the Hamilton Board of Education has been actively involved in this program and addressed the workshop participants on the subject.

Mr. Barrs noted that its becoming clear to the Hamilton Board that a balance is needed in the subject matter taught to students. Traditional areas of "cognitive/knowledge" teaching such as math, English, and science must be complemented with skills development such as decision-making, communication, group process and attitude development which includes moral reasoning and empathy building. For this reason he began working with the Ontario Human Rights Commission 3-1/2 years ago to develop curriculum that would deal with the complex subjects of prejudice and discrimination. Efforts are being made to make this subject more simplistic and understandable to students so that they might become more responsible for their actions. Great strides have been made in the Hamilton community thanks to the support of various groups including the Senior Management at the Hamilton Board of Education, Canada Employment and Immigration and Community Social Service Agencies.

Owen Mahoney then offered a thorough definition of both prejudicisms and discrimination complete with examples so that everyone at the workshop would clearly understand the issues at hand.

Mr. Barrs then continued to expand upon the progress made in the area of policy development. At the present moment there is a committee formed by the Ministry of Education which is exploring the ways and means for the implementation of a standardized race relations policy to be used throughout the province. Guidelines for this include such central issues as:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| . school community relations | . curriculum |
| . staff development | . heritage languages and |
| . employment practices | . racial and ethnic incidents |

Finally Mr. Barrs reviewed the curriculum package which has been developed by the Hamilton Board of Education and the Ontario Human Rights Commission (Race Relations Division). The teacher-student materials look at human rights/race relations and are intended for integration into traditional subject areas written for intermediate and senior divisions. The modules entitled "Preparing Adolescents For A Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Racial Society" are quite extensive and are being co-operatively pilot tested by several boards of education including Windsor, East York, Hamilton, Toronto and Durham County.

The workshop focus then shifted to the school level. Principal Andrew Cranbury of Dalewood Middle School introduced his school as demonstrating a multicultural mix. He explained how Dalewood has incorporated "advisor/advisee" (AD/AE) groups into its mainstream of activities. These student/teacher groups examine humanist issues with the teacher acting as the students advocate.

The AD/AE groups were successfully used during a one day Conference last year which addressed race relations issues. The Conference was a response to an incident of racial-religious name calling which involved several members of the student body. Mr. Cranbury felt that the Conference and the AD/AE meetings have made a difference to better integrating the Dalewood students by showing them that it's alright to be different.

Nancy Martin (also from Dalewood) explained her school's usage of race relations modules from the "Preparing Adolescents For A Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Racial Society" Program. She found them to be well layed out, easy to teach and they communicated social skills and values to the students. Ms. Martin stated, "The integration of these modules into different subject areas will bring about a greater concentration on badly needed attitudinal education".

During the question and answer period that followed these points were raised:

- when a gifted student or a poor achiever is separated from other students it is done for the good of the student. It shouldn't be viewed as discrimination and it doesn't cause any significant resentment among the student body.
- advisor/advisee groups are used in some other schools but not all. It depends on the individual school and their current programs whether or not they'd be adopted.
- the Wentworth County Board of Education is still at the developmental stage in regards to Values Education.

WORKSHOP NO. 5: MINORITY GROUPS AND THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS

CHAIR: Doreen Johnson, Guyana Canadian Cultural Association

WORKSHOP LEADERS: Thea Herman, Counsel, Policy Development Division,
Ministry of the Attorney General

Dr. Patricia Hughes, Vice-Chairman, Ontario Labour Relations Board

Workshop number 5 set out to explain, review and apply the Canadian Charter of Rights to minority groups. In order to accomplish these objectives, Dr. Patricia Hughes initially handed out copies of certain relevant sections of the Charter and

then proceeded to discuss them. She noted that there are 2 types of rights legislation in Canada:

1. constitutional documents - such as the Charter which have broad implications and are difficult to amend,
2. Federal and Provincial Human Rights Legislation - which applies in specific contexts such as those which only occur under provincial jurisdictions (example-denial of educational rights).

Dr. Hughes explained that in order to invoke the Charter you must decide:

1. What is the real nature of my complaint? - depending upon the issue at hand it will affect the section that is applicable.
2. Is the issue with a private employer? - if so then the Human Rights Code may be more relevant.
3. If you go to the Charter what redress do you seek? - do you seek cessation of the infringing activity or monetary remuneration.
4. What will be the effect of winning your case? - you may not achieve your goals even after a decision is reached.
5. How easy is it for the government to defend its position?
6. What is the appropriate way to achieve your goal? - it must be remembered that seeking redress through the Charter is a lengthy and costly experience.

Dr. Hughes and Thea Herman then reviewed the Charter's various sections. Their informative discussion enabled the workshop participants to have a better grasp as to what the Charter is all about. For example, Section 1 establishes the fact that any restrictions placed in the Charter and acted upon by the government must be shown to benefit society as a whole. Section 15 of the Charter gives equal rights to all citizens and allows for amendments through the courts. Section 15 Subsection 2 deals with affirmative action. It ensures minority rights by recognizing the integrity of religion, culture and heritage.

The questions raised in the workshop demonstrated that the Charter is open to interpretation and must be examined on individual case basis. It was asked if the Charter applies to public officials who "speak out"? Dr. Hughes explained that it depends upon the context of the officials' work and whether or not their remarks apply to that context. Another participant asked if Section 28 will override certain physical requirements that are advertised as being necessary for some jobs. The response was that if these physical requirements are shown not to be necessary to the job then they will be overridden.

WORKSHOP NO. 6: RACE RELATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

CHAIR: Nirmal Singh Takhar, Secretary,
Hamilton Human Rights Racial Equality Association

WORKSHOP LEADER: Eric Whist, Regional Supervisor, Race Relation Division,
Ontario Human Rights Commission

The workshop adopted an informal question and answer format. Workshop leader Eric Whist began by describing the result of 2 recent studies which focused on hiring and workplace practices. The research studies were entitled "Who Gets The Job" and "No Discrimination Here". Results showed that, all things being equal, whites received 3 job offers for every 1 offer that a black got. The studies also reinforced that discrimination in the workplace by employers, still exists.

During this discussion Chairperson, Nirmal Takhar asked Professor Harish Jain if he would like to comment on this situation. Dr. Jain then left his seat and addressed the workshop from the head table. Rather than commenting on the job requirements that discriminate against immigrants, Dr. Jain changed the flow of the workshop and began to recite a list of proposals that trade unions should consider in order to combat racism. Among the points mentioned were:

- trade unions should have more officers that are visible minorities, especially on negotiating committees.
- anti-discrimination clauses should be included in collective agreements.
- changes should occur in seniority and lay-off provisions in order to accommodate visible minorities.

This controversial last point raised a lively discussion when several members of the Trade Union movement responded. They suggested that trade unions are active in creating anti-discriminatory policy such as Affirmative Action Programs. Dr. Jain discounted this and asserted that their policies don't reach the grassroots level. Again the unionists responded that this wasn't the case and cited the fact that they have women serving on the Steelworkers Local 1005 Trade Union Council.

Dr. Jain was then asked if under his recommendations he would encourage unions to give preferential treatment to a new employee who is a visible minority rather than someone with years of seniority. He responded affirmatively. The point was then raised that the labour movement is based upon democratic principles and seniority clauses in contracts reflect these principles. Should visible minorities be given preferential seniority and lay-off rights then the cornerstones of the union movement would be shaken. By making length of employment the criteria for personal advancement, unions are attempting to remove bias and discrimination from the workplace.

Eric Whist then shifted the groups focus of attention so that other issues could be addressed. Some of the other questions raised during the discussion dealt with the lack of literature studies on non-Anglo-Saxon people; the lack of reference to visible minorities in business literature; the small amounts of money donated to race relations; and what can be done about the systemic discrimination which is inherent in our society. Mr. Takhar asked Dan McIntyre (Ontario Human Rights Commissioner), who was sitting in on the Conference if he'd like to comment on this last point. Mr. McIntyre briefly reviewed government policies which deal with this and reaffirmed the role which education plays in reducing this type of discrimination.

LUNCHEON ADDRESS: IS RACISM GOING UNDERGROUND?

Rabbi Gunther Plaut, Past Commissioner Ontario Human Rights Commission
and currently, Federal Commissioner to examine Refugee Legislation in Canada

and

Dr. Lily Munro, Minister of Citizenship and Culture for the Province of Ontario

The Mayor's Race Relations Conference sponsored a luncheon address which featured two distinguished speakers: the Minister of Citizenship and Culture, Dr. Lily Munro and Rabbi Gunther Plaut, past commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Dr. Munro began by congratulating Hamilton's Race Relations Committee on such a well attended and productive conference. She then went on to reconfirm her cabinet's commitment to promoting race relations programs and to alleviating all barriers faced by racial minorities.

Too often we look at the downside of racial problems, but in Ontario there are great success stories which should be lauded as well. In the short run we may question government measures which appear to foster unequal treatment (such as Affirmative Action Programs which are often charged with reverse discrimination) but in the long run equality across the board for all citizens will be assured. As conscientious citizens of Ontario we must be careful that policies are not just token quotas but are realistic values incorporated into our society. We must stand by our programs to create the just and fair society which we all desire.

Dr. Munro also mentioned that the government expects private industry to play an important role in race relations. There needs to be a co-operative spirit between employers and employees in regards to following anti-discriminatory policies.

Rabbi Plaut followed Dr. Munro by sharing some of his insights and experiences with the attentive audience. His speech began with an examination of a recent news item which dealt with immigration policies in Canada. One hundred and fifty-five Tamil's recently received great opposition to their attempted entry into Canada. Rabbi Plaut saw this as a case of suppressed racism. He observed that these people of Sri Lankan origin were the object of a public outcry whereas other groups such as the 5,000 Europeans who entered over the last few years claiming religious persecution were common. Although anyone on Canadian soil is allowed to claim refugee status, the Tamil's were not accorded this privilege. A backlash occurred against this group yet the white Europeans did not receive the same difficulties. Just as Dr. Munro stated, we have made progress in Canada but racism still carries on.

Laws, committees and people such as Ontario Human Rights Commissioner, Dan McIntyre exist because the problem does. It wasn't so long ago that being a racist was a socially acceptable behaviour. Rabbi Plaut pointed out the example of 50 years ago when a former mayor of Toronto left money to the University of Toronto on the condition that it only went to Anglo-Saxon students.

Many say that you can't legislate love and racial harmony in society, but the law is a strong educational source and people will incorporate some part of it into

their lives and expressions. The limitations of such legislation are obvious. People are still racist although such behaviour is no longer tolerated publicly. Overt racism is out of fashion.

Rabbi Plaut sees Canada as an experiment in multiculturalism; a living example of a people who don't have to be homogeneous in order to be considered a nation. This is the future, the promise of Canada. By addressing the Conference, he wanted to demonstrate that he is hopeful for Canada. The Mayor's Committee by its Conference and actions will help to make Canada a great multicultural nation.

Jesse Malik, Co-Chairman of the Mayor's Race Relations Committee, thanked Rabbi Plaut for his attendance and conferred that we mustn't make this only a one day affair but carry on this hopeful message in our daily dealings with friends and neighbours.

WORKSHOP NO. 7: RACISM AND SEXISM IN THE WORKPLACE

CHAIR: Elizabeth Avetissian, Hamilton and District Council of Women

WORKSHOP LEADERS: Liana Surjo - Atmojo

Carmencita Hernandez, Deputy Accountant,
Board Member, Coalition of Visible Minority Women and
Ontario Human Rights Commission

This workshop began with both leaders speaking generally on the problems of racism and sexism and how they are manifested in our society. The workplace was emphasized as a particular problem area. Statistics were provided on the status of women in industry. It was revealed that women are located mostly in low paying, low status jobs that have little opportunity for advancement.

Various materials were handed out to the attendees including a flyer on pay equity. One of the presenters recounted her personal experiences with prejudice behaviour, directed towards women of a visible minority status. The remainder of the workshop was a question and answer discussion revolving around the following issues:

- equal pay for work of equal value
- sexual equality and the Law Reform Act
- the significance of "language" as an issue for visible minority women in the workplace
- stereotyping of visible minorities, especially women

Jackie Norris, a workshop participant informed the group that there is human rights curriculum available at the Public School Board which deals with sexual harassment and discrimination against visible minorities and immigrant women. It's important that these problems are discussed in the schools because many students are not aware that they exist. Not until after graduation would students see the full effects of such discriminatory practices.

Ken Stone of the Hamilton and District Labour Council highlighted some of the programs which his group offers to assist victims of racism and women. One such program is entitled, "Racism Hurts Everyone". Women are advised by the council in regards to daycare, maternity leave and other topics. This raised a discussion of several vehicles through which victims of racism and sexism can seek help. In addition to the Labour Council, the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Hamilton Multicultural Centre were cited as "help groups".

There is a vital need for educating the public with respect to women's issues. The curriculum developed by the School Board is an important and positive step in this education process.

WORKSHOP NO. 8: ETHNIC JOKES AND SLURS

CHAIR: Vic Abraham, Director of Local Planning, City of Hamilton

WORKSHOP LEADERS: Paula Buchok, Human Rights Officer, Ontario Human Rights Commission

Dr. Mark Nagler, Department of Sociology Univeristy of Waterloo

Mr. Vic Abraham opened the workshop by describing Hamilton as a multiracial community which is demonstrating increasing amounts of racially motivated jokes, slurs and violent acts. Efforts have to be made to counteract this. He then introduced Professor Mark Nagler and Ms. Paula Buchok as the workshop leaders.

Professor Nagler stated that ethnic humour is one of the most popular forms of joking and although these jokes are generally made lightheartedly without serious intentions they nevertheless affect the victim. People should ask themselves what it's like to be the target of these jokes.

The constant use of ethnic humour implies discrimination and dehumanizes the victim. It helps a bigot to maintain and express their prejudice. In order to understand the victim we have to sensitize ourselves to these people. Unless you, yourself are the victim, the ethnic humour is not viewed as being serious.

He grouped ethnic jokes into 4 classifications:

1. dumb jokes
2. crafty jokes
3. stingy jokes
4. deceitful jokes

They tend to be dangerous since they simply forget or are insensitive to basic issues of prejudice and discrimination. This is easy to do since the person making the jokes assumes that "the overall majority is behind me."

Ms. Buchok reflected that discrimination can take on many social forms. The Human Rights Code only deals with discriminatory behaviour not attitudes. Therefore racial jokes and slurs are only prohibited by the code when there is a definite incident of racial harassment.

In the workplace, evidence of ethnic humour is very prevalent. This can lead to a "poisonous work environment" by stereotyping whole groups of people. One method of resolving this situation is by educating workers about the backgrounds of ethnic workers and use discipline to reinforce the fact that this behavior is not acceptable. The lines of communication must be opened between ethnic groups. Workplace discussions might include:

- what prompted the slur?
- why was it made?
- how does the victim, observer, initiator feel?
- what is different about the group whom the slur was directed at?

Similar deterrents must be placed in the schools. Workshop number 4 provides the example of what Dalewood Middle School did, in order to deal with a racial incident.

Q. Certain minority groups are more visibly distinct. Do less visible minorities receive less support for complaints that they register?

A. No, this isn't the case. If there is any discrimination based upon place of origin, citizenship, colour etc., then a person has the same legitimacy of complaint.

Q. What about the prevalence of ethnic and racial humour in the media?

A. Ethnic labels lead to stereotyping of the victim and add to their vulnerability. The media is more aware of these problems and are improving their efforts to address them.

Q. What percentage of cases brought before the Board of Inquiry are actually resolved?

A. Approximately 90% of the cases are resolved but often they can take quite a long time. If a case goes to court it may take years to resolve.

WORKSHOP NO. 9

INTER-RACIAL DATING

CHAIR: Merv Jobity, Past President, Hamilton and District Multicultural Council

MODERATOR: Paul Hanover, CKLH - FM Radio, Morning Announcer

PANELISTS: Constable Jorge Lasso, Youth Branch, Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police Dept. Constable Mike Webber, Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Dept. and Julia Webber, Mike Webber, Principal, St. Theresa School.

Paul Hanover and Jorge Lasso started proceedings by relating their own personal experiences in regards to inter-racial dating. Mr. Hanover spoke of how, as a young man, he broke off an engagement to an Italian girl because of pressure from his father. They were followed by the remainder of the panel, each relating his or her own views on this topic.

Mike Webber (senior) stated that inter-racial dating should not be viewed as an experience that everyone should participate in. Sincerity in a relationship is very important. A person should enter into a relationship for sincere reasons - not because it is the "in" thing to do; otherwise negative personal experiences may develop.

He believes that a person should be appreciated for what they are and not for the colour of their skin. As a result he was neither opposed when his son entered into an inter-racial marriage nor when his eldest daughter returned to Trinidad to find a suitable partner based upon her strong sense of national heritage.

His daughter-in-law, Julia Webber, mentioned that it took longer to win over her father than her mother on the fact that she was marrying a black person. Her father came from a strong European background and had felt out of place in dealing with his wife's English family. He didn't want his daughter to encounter the same problems. Julia found that other people would make snide remarks concerning her marriage to Michael (junior).

Michael Webber was unsure of how Julia's parents were going to react to their dating and was thus apprehensive about meeting them. Although some of his friends questioned his decision to marry Julia, he stated that they now didn't have any major problems with people. They believe that cultural background is very important and they want their children to identify themselves with both their cultural heritages.

Mr. Webber was asked if there were any problems between the parents. He replied that although they were a bit apprehensive (due to the cultural differences) they found a common interest in the game of Euchre and began to build a friendship around this bond.

Q. What is the success rate for inter-racial marriages?

A. Mike Webber: to my own knowledge it is fairly high.

A. Merv Whitter (workshop participant from Human Rights): statistics show that the success rates for inter-racial marriages are very high.

A. Participant from audience: I am involved in an inter-racial marriage. I feel that because my husband and I talked at length about our marriage and the difficulties which we would encounter, our marriage is a greater success. Other couples don't do this and things such as cultural differences are taken for granted. Later these issues are more likely to cause major problems which may lead to divorce. It's important to resolve everything before you enter into a marriage contract.

The workshop did not involve any couples which were excommunicated from their families due to an inter-racial marriage. Nor was there representation from couples whose marriage did not work out. These views would have contrasted those provided and given a better indication of difficulties which may arise. The key point in this discussion was that a choice by a person to date another person should be the individuals decision. The colour, race or creed should not be a determining factor.

WORKSHOP NO. 10: THE MEDIA AND MINORITY GROUPS: HOW WE SEE EACH OTHER

CHAIR: Jesse Malik, Vice-Chairman Mayor's Race Relations Committee

WORKSHOP LEADER: Alex Beer, Editor, Hamilton Spectator

Workshop #10 discussed the topic of race relations by taking a different approach than was used in other workshops. As editor for the Hamilton Spectator

Alex Beer is responsible for preparing news stories for release to the public. The subject matter of racial equality requires a careful consideration so that any prejudices, conscious or otherwise, would be deleted from these stories. It is a very demanding job which requires both astuteness and sensitivity in portraying events and people in a socially "fair" manner. In order to illustrate the difficulties which an editor faces in such a task, Mr. Beer handed out to the workshop participants, six different news stories. Each dealt with a different minority group. People were asked to evaluate each story as if they were an editor.

Story contents varied. Examples of themes were: the opening of a soul food restaurant in Hamilton, the terrorizing of Pakistani and Indian shopkeepers and the Hamilton Tiger Cats cutting a black football player from their roster and he in turn claims discrimination.

In the case of the soul food restaurant it was pointed out that there was a danger of readers coming to stereotyped conclusions about the relative roles of the co-owners in the story. The report specifically mentions that co-owner Tom White was white, without clarifying whether the other co-owner, Jack Smith was white or black. Since the story concerns the opening of a soul food restaurant, those closely associated with the running of the restaurant may innocently be assumed by many people to be black. This assumption is reinforced by the fact that the story goes out of its way to mention that one of the co-owners is white yet never clarifies upon the other person.

The workshop was most informative and raised issues such as whether the terms negro or black are appropriate descriptions of people in news stories. If a Pakistani family is racially slurred, should these slurs be reported in the press? The lack of general consensus in regards to the many issues raised reinforced the difficulties of such a job.

WORKSHOP NO. 11: THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IN FOSTERING ETHNIC/RACIAL UNDERSTANDING

CHAIR: Clair McKague, Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and Special Services, Hamilton Board of Education
 WORKSHOP LEADER: Teresa Gonzalez, Education Officer, Ontario Ministry of Education, Curriculum Branch

This workshop's intention was to examine the efforts of the Ontario Ministry of Education for developing ethnic race relations policies and programs.

It described the Ministry initiated Provincial Advisory Committee as being a government body composed of 32 people. This committee, which includes teachers, trustees and public persons, will submit its draught in January recommending educational policies. Its report will be used as a model for every school board in the province to create their own race relations policy. Each participant was part of an eleven day training course, designed to help them identify problems and highlight methods of "bringing the community together."

A sub-committee work group consisting of seven people is currently examining the ways and means for developing teacher training in the race relations field. A report is due from them in 1987.

Each school board is encouraged by the Ministry to have professional development days in the area of race relations. There will be a provincial review in 1988 to appraise each regions performance. Next summer these boards will be asked to introduce two race relations courses. They will be integrated into regular subject areas. Affirmative Action programs will also be encouraged throughout Ontario.

The Ministry is also working on an inventory of "Who's Who" in race relations. This should be released in March 1987.

In 1985 Canada Manpower reported that visible minorities (especially Black, Native and East Indian Canadians) had atrocious records of employment. The Ministry of Education is examining ways to improve the situation for visible minority youths. A student committee on Assessment and Placement is looking at:

- what are the weaknesses of existing policies and
- what obstructs these groups?

As an advocate of anti-racist education the Ministry is recommending that school boards ensure that the following issues are addressed:

- children's needs, regardless of their race must be met,
- students must be equipped to work in harmony in a multicultural society,
- children must learn to respect each others differences,
- a commitment to develop curriculum and programs that help students understand who they are, where they are going and how they can contribute to society, is essential,
- visible minority teachers should be encouraged into the system,
- educators should provide leadership to affect change in these areas.

These last points were emphasized because it's the children who are the future of Canada. We must provide them with the environment in which they can grow in all these multicultural ways.

WORKSHOP NO. 12: RACIAL CONFLICT IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

CHAIR: Ahmed Bhabha, Muslim Association of Hamilton
 WORKSHOP LEADERS: Scouter Ward, Human Rights Officer, Ontario Human Rights Commission
 Staff Sergeant Terry Sullivan, Community Services Section, Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Department

Introductory messages stated that in the neighbourhood, by working together, we can remove barriers of bigotry and racial discrimination and open doors to better

ideas to accomplish these goals. Terry Sullivan of the Hamilton-Wentworth Regional Police Department acknowledged that much of this subject is new to us and feedback will help us to decide on which direction to take.

Workshop leader, Scouter Ward, clearly outlined the agenda for the workshop which included a discussion of what occurs when new people arrive in a neighbourhood and are members of a visible minority, conflicts that arise and support systems which exist. He also briefly mentioned other subjects that he had hoped to cover but due to time restrictions it wasn't possible. Instead, he encouraged the participants to follow-up with him on these or any other topics that they might wish to discuss.

A scenario was created which examined interactions between members of the neighbourhood. A new family is moving in to the neighbourhood. The established residents are white, older and fearful/angry of their new neighbours who happen to be East Indian. Their expectations of this new family may follow typical stereotypes. The new people have high expectations. They are hopeful but also fearful. They are emotionally strained by all the moving and uncertainty. They may not be aware of support groups which are available to offer assistance.

The discussion then centered around conflicts which can arise. It was mentioned that problems can arise from people who have predetermined attitudes in respect to visible minorities. The group talked about how bigots are going underground (direct reference was made to Rabbi Plaut's luncheon address) and often they aren't aware of their own bigoted behaviour. It surfaces when the new neighbours arrive. The point was raised in the audience that children often demonstrate discriminatory behaviour that is learned from their parents. It makes it more difficult to educate them in school when they have such ingrained biases.

A list of neighbourhood support groups was developed which included the police, Ontario Human Rights Commission, multicultural centres and the Circle of Friends among others.

The workshop also focused on the police department and the traditional fears which it establishes especially among minority groups. Ms. Remple thought that it was essential for the police to let visible minorities know that they're friends because, from her experience, she believed that 75% of them were scared of the police. Staff Sergeant Sullivan said that the police are aware of these problems and are trying to rectify them. The police offer tours of the police station and let children play in patrol cars as 2 methods for combatting these fears.

As time ran out, Scouter Ward, espoused a call for action. He said that when we are confronted with a bigot, we should stand up to them and say something. It will make our neighbourhoods, better places to live.



PLENARY SESSION: HAMILTON WORKING TOGETHER TOWARD ETHNIC/RACIAL EQUALITY

Moderator: Lydia Goshgarian, Executive Director of the Hamilton and District Multicultural Council

Panelists: Ike Ahmed, Past President, Pakistan Canada Association of Hamilton
 Rabbi Bernard Baskin, Temple Anshe Shalom
 Walter Cooke, Executive Director, Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
 Phemon Ma, Past President, Canadian-Chinese Association
 Santokh Singh Pooni, Chairperson, Hamilton Human Rights Racial Equality Association
 Fulton Seunarine, President United Nations Association of Hamilton

The afternoon Plenary Session was meant to be an open forum whereby Conference participants could ask questions of the distinguished panelists in regards to race relations issues. Unfortunately due to time restrictions the discussion did not evolve. However, each speaker was able to give an insightful personal perspective on the Conference subject matter. The following represents a brief summation of their remarks.

- . Mr. Santokh Singh Pooni conferred that the objectives of the Conference are indeed important issues in our multicultural nation. Referring to Dr. Harrish Jain's breakfast address he pointed out the ingrained discriminatory policies of our hiring system as a major problem. We need to educate all Canadians in respect to racial tolerance in order to avoid ignorance.
- . As a member of the Chinese-Canadian community, Mr. Phemon Ma discussed his experience as a visible minority. He mentioned the great transition of the last 10-15 years which has seen an increasing amount of Chinese-Canadians in professional positions, rather than just in the restaurant business. He cited the accomplishments of Chinese people in Canada. Although he didn't personally have any bad experiences with discrimination he mentioned that various studies and surveys have reinforced that it does exist in Canada. Education was stated as the ultimate solution in changing peoples attitudes.
- . Hamilton's Executive Director of the Regional Indian Centre, Mr. Walter Cooke, recalled the problems that he had in getting an apartment when he first came to Canada in 1981. Over the telephone vacancies existed but when he arrived at the apartment building and the landlord saw that he was a Native Canadian, the vacancy was gone. The stereotyping of the Indian people still exists. He feels that Canadians don't understand all the hurts which Native people have had to endure. "We have a lot of work ahead of us. This is a good place to start."
- . Rabbi Bernard Baskin focused his discussion on the Jewish people. He emphasized past discriminations and future directions for rectifying them. In particular, he focused on how the public's perception of the Jewish race is often stereotypical. For example, Rabbi Baskin gave statistics on the actual numbers of Jewish people in Canada. He explained how these totals are much less than most people probably think. It is the high profile of the Jewish people through their many accomplishments which makes their numbers appear greater.

- . Mr. Ike Ahmed reaffirmed the productiveness of the Conference. Although mentioning that discrimination occurs in our society, he wished to dwell upon the positive aspects of race relations and how the situation has improved over the last six to eight years. He pointed out the desire of governments at all levels throughout Canada to do everything possible to avoid problems that exist elsewhere in the world. We need to believe that regardless of our racial or ethnic origin we truly are Canadians.
- . The final speaker was Mr. Fulton Seunarine, President of the United Nations Association of Hamilton. Mr. Seunarine pointed out that ethnocentrism (the view that one's personal way of life is to be preferred over others) and the economic exploitation of one group of people over another, are two serious problems which must be overcome before racial harmony is possible. We must not allow the ambition and greed of people to breed hatred for minority groups. Mr. Seunarine finished with a quote of Martin Luther King which offered a hopeful message for racial equality.

CLOSING REMARKS

Dan McIntyre, Race Relations Commissioner,
Ontario Human Rights Commission

Mr. McIntyre began his closing remarks by thanking the Mayor's Race Relations Committee for conducting such a successful meeting.

He then commented on the composition of our communities, stating that the trend towards more non-traditional English/French people shows that we are multi-racial and will continue to be so in the future. He offered the personal example where although he was born in Canada and speaks English, due to the colour of his skin he's been discriminated against. That's what racism is all about - non equality.

Several years ago a Native Canadian leader stated that racism was as Canadian as Hockey Night in Canada. Some people thought that this was an alarmist statement wherein fact it is a sad reality. Mr. McIntyre made it clear that he is proud to be Canadian but acknowledges that there are key issues to address such as "...there is no racism here, it's in the United States...". Studies in the U.S. and Britain are almost identical in results to an 1985 Toronto report which looked at Canadian discrimination. If we think we have no problems here we should look again.

The good news is that we are aware of our problems and as a result have formed Conferences such as this. It is important that we continue in our efforts to foster racial equality. We must follow-up on the Conference or else it will be limited in terms of its usefulness. We need to continue our race relations programs in the schools and employment equity in our legislation. Let's continue our efforts to make this a great multicultural nation.

Mayor Robert Morrow concluded proceedings by reaffirming Hamilton's commitment to creating racial equality throughout the region. He stressed that we must all take an active role in continuing to promote racial harmony. Mayor Morrow extended a special thanks to Conference Chairperson Steve Barrs for organizing and conducting such a successful Conference.

Recommendations:

The Mayor's Race Relations Conference was an extremely successful event in many ways. Its two most encouraging aspects were:

1. it enlightened the participants as to what racial equality really means
2. it generated a number of quality ideas which, if implemented, will help our society to reach our multi-cultural goals

The following points represent a cross-section of recommendations generated throughout the day-long conference.

EDUCATION

An essential requirement for achieving a racially tolerant society is the education of all people in regards to ethnic minorities. This theme was reiterated throughout the Conference. Education is a major force in alleviating the ignorance which often causes prejudice and discriminatory behaviour. Within the educational discipline various programs were recommended.

- Values Education Programs should be given greater priority and should be integrated into traditional subject areas ensuring emphasis on character building, attitude development and the development of values systems which reflect our multicultural society.
- curriculum should continue to be developed that accurately reflects our multi-ethnic, multi-racial complexion and reduces discrimination by consciously examining our own institutions, attitudes and behaviours.
- all school boards should develop a Race Relations Policy.
- the Ministry of Education and local school boards should work together to adequately fund and continue to develop Race Relations curriculum.
- educational institutions must take initiatives to deal with racial incidents as they occur, following the leads of other schools such as Dalewood Middle School.

Recommendations:

- . teachers must take disciplinary actions if they are aware of the occurrence of racial slurs. It's recommended that they:
 - a) authorize students to set up policies which deal with this problem and have the students administer the policies themselves,
 - b) create advisor/advisee groups which consist of teacher-student discussions on racial issues,
 - c) get teachers and parents together to deal with multi-racial problems,
 - d) be prepared to evaluate student behaviour as it relates to Race Relations, on an ongoing basis.
- . more minority groups should be accepted into teaching positions to reflect the nature of our changing society.
- . school boards should create professional development days which specifically address race relations topics.
- . more allowance should be made for maintaining heritage languages.
- . the curriculum of school texts should be examined by school boards to check for language and content which may be prejudicial towards visible minorities.
- . administrators should look carefully at how immigrant children are placed and assessed.
- . all citizens should be educated with respect to the Charter of Rights and other government legislation in order to understand our basic rights.

IN THE WORKPLACE

- . employers should provide religious accommodation.
- . entry requirements must only be created that are absolutely necessary for the job.
- . narrow channels of recruitment must be broadened to include minority groups.

Recommendations:

- . the public must be educated on women's issues in order to decrease stereotypes and create equality in the workplace. In this way women will be able to move away from traditional low paying jobs.
- . the problem of the racial jokes and slurs which create a "poisoned workplace" must be addressed. Educating workers about other cultures in order to decrease these incidents is necessary. The lines of communication must be opened between workers, possibly by having group discussions on these subjects.
- . a co-operation between employers and employees must be fostered in order to make equality programs such as Affirmative Action, a success. The government should openly encourage this.
- . trade unions should make more visible minorities, union officers and include them on negotiating committees.
- . trade unions should negotiate anti-discrimination clauses into their contracts.
- . the media should increase its efforts to show multi-cultural programs and promote cultural diversity. Minorities should have media exposure as newscasters and there should be a multicultural mandate in all programming.

GOVERNMENT

- . the government must create proactive not reactive Immigration policies.
- . lists of support groups should be made available to all citizens especially new immigrants.
- . the powers of government agencies that deal with race relations should be increased and streamlined in order to decrease delays in processing cases.
- . all levels of government should establish groups to deal with racial problems.
- . the police should continue in their efforts to improve their public image especially to new immigrants.

Recommendations:

GENERAL

- . committees such as the Mayor's Race Relations Committee must continue to play an advisory role, especially in areas of systemic discrimination, which is one of the most serious due to its unconscious nature.
- . we must re-evaluate the terms which we use to describe people.
- . we must listen to others at a cross-cultural level, learn to empathize and appreciate that people are individuals with their own goals.
- . seminars such as this must be encouraged. The media exposure of such an event helps to bring the message of racial equality to all Canadians.
- . conference attendees should carry these messages to the whole community - we musn't make this just a one day affair.

Glimpses



of the Conference